

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 08576 161003Z
ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, XF
SUBJECT: DECEMBER 15 SYRIAN MEDIA REVIEW

1. REPORTING ON LEBANON CONTINUED TO BE SPARSE. MEDIA NOTED THAT QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE MET DECEMBER 14 IN BEIRUT, UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF PRES. SARKIS, TO DISCUSS PLAN TO COLLECT HEAVY WEAPONS AND PLACE THEM UNDER SUPERVISION OF ADF. COMMITTEE INCLUDED REPS. FROM SYRIA, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT. FOLLOWING MEETING, LT. GEN. ALI SHAIR REPORTEDLY ANNOUNCED THAT NEXT STEP WILL INCLUDE MEETING WITH ARAFAT TO DISCUSS WEAPONS COLLECTION ISSUE.

2. ON REGIONAL FRONT, MEDIA HIGHLIGHTED VISIT TO SYRIA PREVIOUS DAY OF JORDANING PRIMIN BADRAN, ACCOMPANIED BY ABD AL-HAMID SHARAF, TO MEET WITH PRIMIN KHULAYFAWI AND NUMBER OF OTHER OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. PRESS REPORTED THAT LEADER OF SYRIAN DELEGATION TO ARAB JOURNALISTS' CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS, SANA DIRECTOR
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 08576 161003Z

SABIR FALHUT, "REFUTED THE LIES AND ALLEGATIONS OF THE

IRAQI REGIME AGAINST SYRIA'S STAND" CONTAINED IN SPEECH OF IRAQI DELEGATE. PRESS NOTED THAT LEBANESE DELEGATION SUPPORTED FALHUT'S REBUTTAL.

4. AL-BAATH EDITORIAL REVIEWED ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE OF GENEVA CONFERENCE -- "ALTHOUGH THIS DOES NOT INDICATE ANY PROGRESS TOWARDS READINESS TO PULL BACK AND TO RECOGNIZE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS" -- AND PROPOSAL TO CONVENE ME VERSION OF HELSINKI CONFERENCE. HE CONCLUDED THAT THIS WAS EVIDENCE OF ISRAELI MANEUVERING TO "EVADE ISSUE OF RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, TO EMBARRASS ARABS AND TO UNDERMINE ARAB PRESSURES" TOWARD AGREEMENT ON COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. TISHRIIN COLUMNIST PRAISED SYRO-EGYPTIAN COOPERATION AND OPINED THAT ARAB ATTENTION WILL FOCUS ON CAIRO DURING FORTHCOMING ASAD VISIT.

5. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST MENTION WE HAVE SEEN IN LOCAL PRESS OF PRIMIN RABIN'S PROPOSAL TO CONVENE HELSINKI-TYPE CONFERENCE. AS MAY BE EXPECTED, IT WAS NOT WARMLY RECEIVED IN DAMASCUS, ALTHOUGH PRESS DID NOT FLATLY REJECT IDEA. MURPHY

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